Activity: Make Your Own World War I Infographic

Guiding question:
How can students synthesize information from the written narrative, maps, and statistics of the American Battle Monument Commission’s American Armies and Battlefields in Europe to build an argument about contributions made by the United States to the outcome of World War I?

DEVELOPED BY KATE HARRIS

Grade Level(s): 9-12
Subject(s): Social Studies
Overview

Using statistics from the American Battle Monument Commission’s (ABMC) *American Armies and Battlefields in Europe* (Blue Book), students will first analyze a sample infographic and then build their own. The process includes developing an essential question about World War I (WWI) and answering it using maps and statistics from the Blue Book. Finally, students will use Piktochart to create an infographic explaining their answers to the questions.

Historical Context

The Meuse-Argonne Offensive took place on the Western Front of WWI between September 26, 1918 and the Armistice of November 11, 1918. It was one of the largest military offensives in U.S. history with 1.2 million U.S. troops involved. By this time, both sides of the war had lost staggering numbers of troops and were facing financial ruin. With its entrance into the war in 1917, the United States provided much-needed military and financial support for the Allies.

Objectives

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to

- Synthesize information from narratives, maps, and statistics;
- Build an argument about the United States’ contribution to WWI; and
- Create an infographic using the web application Piktochart (or other infographic software) to demonstrate their arguments.

"The ABMC Blue Book is full of so much good data about the United States' contribution to World War I, but it can be challenging to make meaning out of the pages of charts and maps. This activity asks students to slow down, consider what they want to learn about the American part in the conflict, and develop an infographic that interprets and synthesizes the diverse resources available in the book. Importantly, it also asks students to practice skills they will no doubt use regularly, analyzing the news infographics they encounter and articulating evidence-based arguments in a visual manner suitable for the web."

—Kate Harris
Standards Connections

Connections to Common Core

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Connections to C3 Framework

D2.His.10.9-12. Detect possible limitations in various kinds of historical evidence and differing secondary interpretations.


D2.His.15.9-12. Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past.

Documents Used ★ indicates an ABMC source

Primary Sources

American Armies and Battlefields in Europe, 1938 ★
American Battle Monuments Commission

Infographic, Kate Harris, “The Meuse-Argonne Cemetery: How does it honor American soldiers?”
Materials

- WWI Infographic Planning Sheet
- WWI Infographic Project Rubric
- Smart Board or projector
- Access to the Piktochart website
- Computers with internet access for each student

Lesson Preparation

- Ensure that all technology and websites are working.
- Make copies of the WWI Infographic Planning Sheet for each student.

Procedure

Activity One: Anticipatory Set (20 minutes)

- Project the infographic, “The Meuse-Argonne Cemetery: How does it honor American soldiers?” as an example of an infographic made using resources available in the Blue Book and elsewhere.
- Have students explore the infographic. Note how the infographic poses and answers a question and incorporates statistics, visuals, and facts to support the answer.
  - Teacher Tip: Note that infographics often have more utility on the web than when printed. In this infographic, for example, hovering the mouse over certain graphics provides additional information.
- Have students identify the question that it poses and the various pieces of evidence that are used to support it.
- Critique the infographic by asking students:
  - What other information might be helpful?
  - What does it do well?

Activity Two: Creating a WWI Infographic (70 minutes)

- Have students choose or develop a question about WWI.
  - Teacher Tip: Students will be more successful with narrowly focused questions. Some possible questions based on resources available in the Blue Book are:
    - How much did the United States contribute to the war in terms of military strength?
    - How quickly was the United States able to join the fight?
    - How did the Meuse-Argonne Offensive impact the outcome of the war?
    - How much economic strength did the United States contribute to the war?
• Have students choose appropriate statistics from the Blue Book to incorporate into their infographic. Students should aim for a combination of three graphs or statistics to share that will help readers answer their question.

• Have students use the WWI Infographic Planning Sheet to make sure students have what they need before they begin to work online.

• Direct students to develop a thesis, or answer, to their question, based on the evidence they have found.

• Log in to Piktochart, and have each student create an account. Students may choose a theme they feel is appropriate for their question and label their infographic with the question they would like to answer.
  ◦ Teacher Tip: If unfamiliar with Piktochart, students should watch the YouTube tutorial on how to create a Piktochart infographic. This is a very thorough tutorial created by Secondary Solutions that explains how to use Piktochart in the classroom.

• Have students build their infographics, incorporating their questions, statistics, and theses. Images and maps could also be used to support their theses.
  ◦ Teacher Tip: Have students share their infographics with each other via a course website, Google Classroom, or printed bulletin board.

Assessment
• Assess students using the WWI Infographic Project Rubric.

Methods for Extension
• Students could develop their infographics into Document-Based Questions (DBQs) as the basis for a future activity.

• Students could work on answering each other’s questions as practice DBQs.

Adaptations
• The teacher could pre-select a number of sources from the Blue Book to help students develop questions. Statistics are found in Chapter XIV, pages 495-517.

• Depending on time limitations, this lesson may be spread out over more than one class period.
**WWI Infographic Planning Sheet**

What is the question you are trying to answer?

---

**Sources of Evidence**

You will need three pieces of evidence to support your answer. These can be statistics, maps, or quotes, from the Blue Book or from other resources approved by your teacher. Go to the Blue Book to look for information. An easy way to save graphics from this online Blue Book is to take a screenshot and then save the file somewhere that you can easily find again.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source 1</th>
<th>Source 2</th>
<th>Source 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is it?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example: <em>Map of American Forces in September, 1918</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **How does it help me answer my question?** |
| Example: It shows that by September, the Americans were fighting in a crucial area for the Allies. |
Where can I find it again?
Example: Page 355 in the Blue Book, saved the image to my desktop, etc.

What is my thesis, or answer, to my question?

Once your planning sheet has been reviewed by the teacher, go to Piktochart and create a new, free account with your email. Write down your password somewhere safe! Now work on building your new infographic.
# WWI Infographic Project Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question</strong></td>
<td>Question is clearly worded, reflects content discussed in this unit, and requires analysis and/or higher-order thinking to answer.</td>
<td>Question reflects content discussed in this unit and requires analysis and/or higher-order thinking to answer.</td>
<td>Question reflects content discussed in this unit but may be answered without analysis or is poorly worded.</td>
<td>Question does not clearly relate to content from this unit or is very poorly worded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source 1</strong></td>
<td>Found in the Blue Book, clearly transferred into the infographic, relates to the topic, and helps answer the question.</td>
<td>Found in the Blue Book, appears in the infographic (but may have some errors or reflect poor design choices), relates to the topic, and helps answer the question.</td>
<td>Source appears in the infographic (but may have some errors or reflect poor design choices), relates to the topic, but doesn’t necessarily answer the question.</td>
<td>Source may not relate to the content or does not appear clearly in the infographic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source 2</strong></td>
<td>Same as Source 1</td>
<td>Same as Source 1</td>
<td>Same as Source 1</td>
<td>Same as Source 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source 3</strong></td>
<td>Same as Source 1</td>
<td>Same as Source 1</td>
<td>Same as Source 1</td>
<td>Same as Source 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Design and Aesthetic Appeal</strong></td>
<td>Infographic is easy to read and aesthetically pleasing. Statistics and sources are clearly presented. It is easy to find the question and the answer.</td>
<td>Infographic is easy to read and aesthetically pleasing. Most statistics and sources are clearly presented. It is easy to find the question and the answer.</td>
<td>Infographic is easy to read, but there may be some poor design choices (cluttered, confusing, or difficult to find information). Some statistics and sources are clearly presented. It is possible to find the question and the answer.</td>
<td>Infographic is difficult to read and there may be some poor design choices (cluttered, confusing, or difficult to find information). It is not easy to find the question or answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Answer and Synethesis of Sources</strong></td>
<td>Answer is clearly presented, accurate, and reflects use of all three sources. It fairly acknowledges any discrepancies or complexities that emerge as a result of the sources.</td>
<td>Answer is clearly presented, accurate, and reflects use of all three sources. It acknowledges any discrepancies or complexities that emerge as a result of the sources, although there may be some mistakes.</td>
<td>Answer is clearly presented and reflects use of most of the three sources. There may be some mistakes.</td>
<td>Answer is incomplete, inaccurate, or missing. More effort is required to develop a thorough answer to the question.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>